

VIP

**VOLUNTEERS IN
PREVENTION/PROBATION**
GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY PROBATE COURT

July-August, 2011
Volume 40, Issue 4



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Attention all Transporters and Interested Volunteers

A transport training review will be held:

Wednesday, August 24, 2011

**5:00-7:30 pm
RSVP**



Juvenile probation staff will join staff from Volunteer Services and a representative from the Sheriff's Department for a review of guidelines and procedures. Volunteer transporters respond, many times with very short notice to safely drive youth to and from residential placements.

Please plan on joining us as we reconnect and discuss any transport/youth and safety issues you may have.

*A light supper will be served. Please RSVP at 231-922-4827.

Save the Date

**September 20, 2011
4:00 pm**

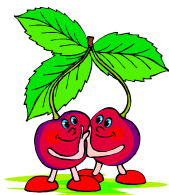
A combined meeting of Learning Partners and CASA volunteers will be held.

Dr. Amelia Siders will be present to discuss important issues for children and her work through the Child Advocacy Center.

Michigan CASA and Department of Human Services

Michigan CASA Executive Director Christie Lypka began a dialogue with new DHS Director Maura Corrigan, who took over the position in January, 2011.

Both directors agreed that understanding the role of CASA volunteers in the system should be made clear to all new employees as well as to those currently working in the department. To ensure that this happens, Michigan CASA will now be directly involved in training both new and current staff. "Ms. Lypka will provide in-service training sessions for DHS staff," said Director Corrigan. "The sessions will focus on the history of CASA, the role of the CASA volunteer and the relationship between DHS and CASA. We know that this will serve to strengthen our relationship as we work cooperatively to do what is in the best interest of children."



**National Cherry Festival
July 2-9, 2011**

An activity for everyone!

Go to www.cherryfestival.org for more info.

And, try the TC Convention & Visitors Bureau at www.traversecity.com for other fun events.

Happy Birthday

July

Michael Robold
Dan Mixer
Luann Heinert
Lori Conard
Laura Mains
Matthew Bertrand
Kyrie Caswell
Barbara Wolff

Carla Lamphere
Bev Popovits
Jerry O'Hearn
Karen Grant
Carrie Brown
Erin Connolly
Haley Morris



August

Elliot Morrison
Jane Vitkus
Etta Mary Rajkovich
Carol Thompson
John Wilkins
Barbara Disborough
Tim Doyle
Theresa Galante
Kate Howard

Joan Lefferts
Ruth Bay
Ed Thoma
Don Kuehlhorn
Bettie Wilkins
Karen Gartland
Susan Nink
Pat Erway

New for Volunteers!

Volunteer Services now has a computer available to volunteers for writing reports. It will be available anytime during regular office hours. Please call ahead if you plan to come in and write your report/reports so you can be sure someone else is not using it.

Type and print it here!



Thank You!

Thanks to Ronda Franklin for all of her work and donations for the Learning Partner Mother's Day Cookie Bake. Kids and parents had a great time and took home some cool treats.

Thanks also to Roy Bernier for supplies for New Vision Academy.

Thank you to Debra Smith, Administrator at Tendercare Nursing Facility for the tour.

Thoughts and Prayers



We were saddened to hear that CASA volunteer Mary Ann Wichtner's husband passed away recently.

Also, Learning Partner volunteer Roberta Kuhlman passed away this past month. Although she was with us as a volunteer a short time, she had a great desire to help others.

Northwestern Michigan College Learn for Life Summer Classes

The NMC "Learn for Life" class schedule is out! There over 250 classes being offered through the Summer Extended Education Classes. Lots of outdoor activities, computers, music, art and so much more.

The "College for Kids" program offers kids ages 4-17 opportunities in cooking, writing, aviation, outdoor adventures, the list goes on and on.

Go to www.nmc.edu/ees for class schedules and how to register.





Learning Partners wrapped up 6 sessions of Swim and Water Safety

lessons at the Civic Center Pool on May 20. We had 17 children attend all of the weekly sessions which included basic and advanced swim strokes, general water safety and how to help someone in need, and even how to safely paddle a canoe. The Learning Partners learned a little boating safety with a review of PFDs (lifejackets) and what to do if their canoe tips over or their boat is swamped with water. Each student received a completion certificate and a swim gift on the final day. A big thanks to all of our transporting and helping volunteers! Our "in-the-pool crew" included: Katie Dockery, Judine Leavitt, Natalie Terrell and Robin Bowden.



Learning Partners
Boat Safety

On Wednesday, July 20th, Learning Partners will enjoy an afternoon of fishing and fun. Thanks to the support of our volunteers and our lead fisherman, Dan Briggs, we will help our elementary school-aged students enjoy a summer tradition! We will supply the bait, tackle and instruction, and Learning Partner families are invited free of charge.

We plan to hold our Annual Back-to-School Celebration in late August. We will go on a nature hike and enjoy a potluck dinner for all Learning Partner students and families and Learning Partner Volunteers. School supplies and fun will be offered to all of our students!



CASA

On August 16, Dana LaCross, Traverse City Public Schools social worker, former Therapeutic Program Coordinator with our Court, will return to review the art and technique of writing fact based court reports.

Dana says she will be "freshening up her scenarios" and notes to provide tips to CASA volunteers, both new and experienced.

Writing court reports is an important part of the role of a CASA volunteer. I hope you can join us to learn more about what is needed in writing them.

Save the Date

**November 11 and 12, 2011
Michigan CASA Conference
Lansing, Michigan
The Lexington Lansing Hotel**

More information will be coming later.



As a service project, the 7th grade National Junior Honor Society at Traverse City East Middle School collected stuffed animals to be donated to the adoption program at the Grand Traverse Family Court.

They asked the student body and staff to bring in stuffed animals throughout the month of March. They called their project "March of the Animals."

They received 472 donated animals! 7th graders Cassidy Merten and Meghan Puckett (photo above with Judge Stowe) delivered the animals to the court on Monday, April 18.

**Thank you National Junior Honor Society,
for a wonderful donation for children!**

Truancy Support Classes

A group of volunteers are in the planning stages of a class for youth and for parents involved in the court's Truancy Intervention program. The goal of the classes would be to provide information and support to kids and their families who struggle with lack of school attendance and tardiness which are seen as barriers for success.

Thank you:

Dave Speirs	Parker Field
Roy Bernier	Judy Clark
Sharon Herron	Michael Herron

More volunteers will be needed. We'll keep you posted on our progress.

Prescription Drug Abuse and What We Can Do

The problem of prescription drug abuse is very real and very serious throughout the USA including Northern Michigan.

There are some things we can all do to help prevent prescription drug abuse.

If you have unused medications in your home, dissolve unused pills and capsules in water, place in an undesirable substance like coffee grounds and dispose in the trash as usual.

Call your local County Sheriff's Department for information on how they can help you dispose of prescription medications.

Know which of your medications, if any, are drugs that are likely to be abused and take steps to secure them in your home.

Remember that even some non-prescription medicines can be abused. Most common are cold, allergy, and cough preparations that you have to ask the pharmacist for and sign for.

Let's be aware of the dangers and minimize them when we can.

Rug Project to Benefit New Vision and CASA

New Vision Academy youth will make some of these wonderful rugs (pictured below) during their summer classes. Volunteer Diana Zapalski will lead these classes for kids during the month of August. She hopes to have rugs made for the kids to take home and also one for the CASA gift basket that CASA's put together each fall for the Michigan CASA conference.

These rugs are made of old sheets. If you have any sheets and/or pillowcases that you would like to donate to this project, please drop them off at Volunteer Services Offices at any time. The sheets can be any color or pattern and even be threadbare, we can still use them.



"Deckster" with rug
Photo by Diana Zapalski

Please read on

Rag Rug Class

In the context of preparing to make rag rugs (pictured above with "Deckster"), with the New Vision Academy kids, and for the Annual CASA Conference Silent Auction Gift Basket, Diana Zapalski will be at the Volunteer Services offices on the following date to teach others who are interested in learning this craft:

**Tuesday, July 19, 2011
2:00—5:00 pm
Multi-Purpose Room**

You will need to bring 2 to 3 old sheets in colors of your preference, scissors, a ruler, needle, and thread.

A small donation will be used to buy items to put in the CASA silent auction basket.

If you are interested in attending, please RSVP at 231-922-4827.



GRAND TRAVERSE AREA LITERACY COUNCIL



The past 2 months have been busy for GTALC. We have been hard at work on our new strategic plan using NorthSky consultant, Judith Lindenau to help the planning committee comprised of Ruth Bay, Anne Brasie, Mary DeGrazia and myself to set the framework of the plan.

At a special July meeting, the entire board will meet with Ms. Lindenau to complete the plan. At that meeting we will also set the Annual Schedule and 2011-12 budget, all coordinated with the strategic plan.

To help GTALC move forward the board has accepted the appointments of two new members:

Jill Porter, Coordinator of Adult Services, Traverse Area District Library. Jill brings wealth of background of both library experience in the public and private sector, and background in information technology, financial and marketing activities.

Our second new board member is Gerald DeGrazia, whose background includes consulting in the telecommunications field, and senior level administrative positions in Time Warner Cable. Gerry has a rich background in finance (no pun intended) and will be taking on the position of GTALC treasurer.

Further board transitions include Anne Braise stepping down from the treasurer's position to remain on the board and focus her attention on heading up our fund development team.

Sadly another transition includes the resignation from the board of Karen Conrad, who led the redevelopment of of tutor training, upgrades of tutor/learner materials the establishment of the program managers who oversaw and operated tutor training, learner assessment and learner/tutor matching. Karen will continue to fill out her role of tutor.

GTALC has now added to it's affiliations Grand Traverse Area District Library. Through the efforts of GTALC vice president Mary DeGrazia and new board member, Jill Porter, a new adult reader collection developed by Jill will include GTALC books and learning materials which will be accessible at the Traverse City District Library on Woodmere to learners and our tutors. Some materials will be held in reserve for our tutors exclusive use.

This new outlet gives GTALC learners and tutors two sites to obtain materials—the main branch of the library and GTALC's office in the Robert P. Griffin Hall of Justice Building (court complex).

Lastly, transitions include the development of a new website (currently under construction) which when completed will provide for delivery of online applications for both learners and tutors, facility for tutors to share ideas with each other, for learners to communicate with their tutors, for online fund development campaigns and for secure password protection in most of the previously mentioned areas.

While all of this 'high level' stuff operates, don't forget GTALC's mission is to enable adults realize their literacy goals, and that mission is realized one learning at a time working with a dedicated tutor.

If can read you can be a tutor and help complete another person's life. To find out about the next tutor training session or to volunteer to help in the areas of office work. Special events, or fund raising, call us at 231-922-4574 or email gtalc22@gmail.com.

Dick Thompson, President



GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT
DAVID L. STOWE, PROBATE & FAMILY COURT JUDGE
280 Washington St, Suite B 150, Traverse City, MI 49684
922-4827

PRE-SORT STD.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49684
PERMIT NO. 229

Return Service Requested

ALL MEETINGS TAKE PLACE AT VOLUNTEER SERVICES
UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

LEARNING PARTNERS

1st Tuesday—4:00—5:00 pm



No Meetings in July or August

Information about summer field trips will be mailed to volunteers

CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate)

3rd Tuesday – 4:00 – 6:00 pm

No Meeting in July

Tuesday, August 16



LITERACY COUNCIL

3rd Wednesday – 6:00 pm

Traverse Area District Library

Wednesday, July 20

Wednesday, August 17



**Don't Miss The
National Cherry Festival**

July 2—9, 2011



**Volunteer Services Offices
Will Be Closed**

Monday, July 4, 2011

Independence Day



Monday, September 5, 2011

Labor Day